CLAIMS

1. A content-providing system comprising a
terminal for utilizing contents and a server connected to
said terminal through a network and used for managing
said contents wherein:

said terminal includes:

storage means for storing said contents in advance;

request means for making a request for utilization
of predetermined contents pertaining to a range to be
purchased by transmission of content IDs identifying said
predetermined contents among a plurality of said contents
stored in said storage means and an electronic point
count for purchasing said predetermined contents to said
server;

reception means for receiving a table associating
said content IDs with said electronic point count and a
utilization condition transmitted by said server at said
request made by said request means;

utilization-condition storage means for storing
said utilization condition and said table, which are
received by said reception means; and

utilization execution means for executing
utilization of said predetermined contents on the basis
of said utilization condition and said table, which have

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been stored in said utilization-condition storage means; whereas

said server includes:

utilization-condition transmission means for transmitting said table associating said content IDs with said electronic point count and said utilization condition for utilizing said predetermined contents pertaining to said range as contents, utilization of which is requested by said request means employed in said terminal, to said terminal;

sales-history information storage means for storing sales-history information of said predetermined contents pertaining to said range as information including said content IDs identifying said predetermined contents, utilization of which is requested by said request means employed in said terminal;

collection means for collecting sales records of contents utilized by said terminal on the basis of said sales-history information stored in said sales-history information storage means; and

processing execution means for carrying out processing based on said sales records; and

in a process to update said electronic point count of said table, said utilization-condition transmission

means employed in said server further transmits a content ID, said electronic point count of which is to be updated, and an update of said electronic point count whereas said utilization-condition storage means employed in said terminal updates said table on the basis of said content ID and said update of said electronic point count, which are received from said server.

2. An information-processing apparatus connected to a terminal for using a content through a network, said information-processing apparatus comprising:

transmission means for transmitting a table associating content IDs of contents with an electronic point count and a utilization condition for utilizing predetermined contents pertaining to a range as contents, utilization of which is requested by said terminal, to said terminal;

sales-history information storage means for storing sales-history information of said predetermined contents pertaining to said range received from said terminal as information including said content IDs identifying said predetermined contents;

collection means for collecting sales records of contents utilized by said terminal on the basis of said sales-history information stored in said sales-history

information storage means; and

processing execution means for carrying out processing based on said sales records,

wherein, in a process to update said electronic point count of said table, said transmission means further transmits a content ID, said electronic point count of which is to be updated, and an update of said electronic point count to said terminal.

3. The information-processing apparatus according to claim 2 wherein said sales-history information stored in said sales-history information storage means further includes an apparatus ID used for identifying said terminal.

4. The information-processing apparatus according to claim 2, said information-processing apparatus further comprising:

acquisition means for acquiring execution-history information representing a history of executions of utilizations of said contents stored in said terminal; and

utilization-history information storage means for storing utilization-history information including said content ID received from said server and said execution-history information acquired by said acquisition means,

wherein said collection means further collects utilization records of contents utilized by said terminal on the basis of said utilization-history information.

5. The information-processing apparatus according to claim 4, said information-processing apparatus further comprising favorite extraction means for extracting information of contents each serving as a favorite with a user using said terminal on the basis of said utilization-history information stored in said utilization-history information storage means and information on favorites stored in said terminal, wherein said transmission means transmits information extracted by said favorite extraction means as said information of contents each serving as a favorite with said user using said terminal to said terminal.

6. An information-processing method adopted by an information-processing apparatus connected to a terminal for using a content through a network, said information-processing method comprising:

a first transmission step of transmitting a table associating content IDs of contents with an electronic point count and a utilization condition for utilizing predetermined contents pertaining to a range as contents, utilization of which is requested by said terminal, to

said terminal;

a sales-history information storage control step of controlling an operation to store sales-history information of said predetermined contents pertaining to said range received from said terminal as information including said content IDs identifying said predetermined contents;

a collection step of collecting sales records of contents utilized by said terminal on the basis of said sales-history information stored in said operation controlled by processing carried out at said sales-history information storage control step;

a processing execution step of carrying out processing based on said sales records; and

a second transmission step of transmitting a content ID, said electronic point count of which is to be updated, and an update of said electronic point count to said terminal in a process to update said electronic point count of said table.

7. A program to be executed by a computer as a program for controlling an information-processing apparatus, which is connected to a terminal for using a content through a network, to carry out processing comprising:

a first transmission step of transmitting a table associating content IDs of contents with an electronic point count and a utilization condition for utilizing predetermined contents pertaining to a range as contents, utilization of which is requested by said terminal, to said terminal;

a sales-history information storage control step of controlling an operation to store sales-history information of said predetermined contents pertaining to said range received from said terminal as information including said content IDs identifying said predetermined contents;

a collection step of collecting sales records of contents utilized by said terminal on the basis of said sales-history information stored in said operation controlled by processing carried out at said sales-history information storage control step;

a processing execution step of carrying out processing based on said sales records; and

a second transmission step of transmitting a content ID, said electronic point count of which is to be updated, and an update of said electronic point count to said terminal in a process to update said electronic point count of said table.

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8. An information-processing apparatus connected
by a network to a server for providing contents, said
information-processing apparatus comprising:

storage means for storing said contents in advance;

request means for making a request for utilization
of predetermined contents pertaining to a range to be
purchased by transmission of content IDs identifying said
predetermined contents among a plurality of said contents
stored in said storage means and an electronic point
count for purchasing said predetermined contents to said
server;

reception means for receiving a table associating
said content IDs with said electronic point count and a
utilization condition transmitted by said server at said
request made by said request means;

utilization-condition storage means for storing
said utilization condition and said table, which are
received by said reception means; and

utilization execution means for executing
utilization of said predetermined contents on the basis
of said utilization condition and said table, which are
stored in said utilization-condition storage means,

wherein, when a content ID, said electronic point
count of which is to be updated, and an update of said

electronic point count are received from said server, said utilization-condition storage means updates said table on the basis of said received content ID and said received update of said electronic point count.

9. The information-processing apparatus according to claim 8, said information-processing apparatus further comprising ID storage means for storing an apparatus ID used for identifying said information-processing apparatus, wherein said request means transmits said apparatus ID from said ID storage means along with said content IDs of said predetermined contents pertaining to said range to be purchased and said electronic point count for purchasing said predetermined contents in order to make said request for utilization of said predetermined contents pertaining to said range.

10. The information-processing apparatus according to claim 8, said information-processing apparatus further comprising:

execution-history information storage means for storing execution-history information representing a history of executions of utilizations of said predetermined contents; and

execution-history information transmission means for transmitting said execution-history information

stored in said execution-history information storage
means to said server.

11. The information-processing apparatus according
to claim 8 wherein:

said reception means further receives information
on favorite contents of a user using said information-
processing apparatus from said server as information
based on said execution-history information; and

said utilization execution means executes
utilizations of said predetermined contents on the basis
of said information on favorite contents.

12. An information-processing method adopted by an
information-processing apparatus connected by a network
to a server for providing contents, said information-
processing method comprising:

a request step of making a request for utilization
of predetermined contents pertaining to a range to be
purchased by transmission of content IDs identifying said
predetermined contents among a plurality of said contents
stored in advance and an electronic point count for
purchasing said predetermined contents to said server;

a reception step of receiving a table associating
said content IDs with said electronic point count and a
utilization condition transmitted by said server at said

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request made in processing carried out at said request step;

a utilization-condition storage control step of controlling an operation to store said utilization condition and said table, which are received in processing carried out at said reception step, into a utilization-condition storage unit;

a utilization execution step of executing utilization of said predetermined contents on the basis of said utilization condition and said table, which are stored in said operation controlled by processing carried out at said utilization-condition storage control step; and

an updating step of updating said table stored in said utilization-condition storage unit on the basis of a content ID, said electronic point count of which is to be updated, and an update of said electronic point count when said content ID and said update are received from said server.

13. A program to be executed by a computer as a program for controlling an information-processing apparatus, which is connected to a server for providing contents through a network, to carry out processing comprising:

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a request step of making a request for utilization

of predetermined contents pertaining to a range to be

purchased by transmission of content IDs identifying said

predetermined contents among a plurality of said contents

stored in advance and an electronic point count for

purchasing said predetermined contents to said server;

a reception step of receiving a table associating

said content IDs with said electronic point count and a

utilization condition transmitted by said server at said

request made in processing carried out at said request

step;

a utilization-condition storage control step of

controlling an operation to store said utilization

condition and said table, which are received in

processing carried out at said reception step, into a

utilization-condition storage unit;

a utilization execution step of executing

utilization of said predetermined contents on the basis

of said utilization condition and said table, which are

stored in said operation controlled by processing carried

out at said utilization-condition storage control step;

and

an updating step of updating said table stored in

said utilization-condition storage unit on the basis of a

content ID, said electronic point count of which is to be updated, and an update of said electronic point count when said content ID and said update are received from said server.

14. A content-providing system comprising a terminal for utilizing contents and a server connected to said terminal through a network and used for managing said contents wherein:

said terminal includes:

storage means for storing said contents in advance;

ID storage means for storing an apparatus ID of said terminal or a program ID of an application program used for utilizing a content;

request means for making a request for utilization of predetermined contents specified among said contents stored in said storage means by transmission of content IDs identifying said predetermined contents and said apparatus ID or said program ID to said server;

reception means for receiving a utilization condition transmitted by said server at said request made by said request means; and

utilization execution means for executing utilization of said predetermined contents on the basis of said utilization condition by execution of said

application program, whereas

said server includes:

utilization-condition transmission means for transmitting a utilization condition for utilizing said predetermined contents, utilization of which is requested by said request means employed in said terminal, to said terminal;

utilization-history information storage means for storing information including said content IDs and said apparatus ID or said program ID, which are received from said request means employed in said terminal, as utilization-history information of said predetermined contents;

collection means for collecting utilization records of contents utilized by said terminal or utilized by execution of said application program on the basis of said utilization-history information stored in said utilization-history information storage means; and

processing execution means for carrying out processing based on said utilization records.

15. The content-providing system according to claim 14 wherein said storage means of said terminal can be mounted and demounted on and from said terminal.

16. The content-providing system according to

claim 14 wherein:

said terminal further comprises execution-history information storage means for storing execution-history information representing a history of executions of said application program used for utilizing said predetermined contents;

said server further comprises acquisition means for acquiring said execution-history information stored in said execution-history storage means employed in said terminal;

said utilization-history information storage means employed in said server is used for storing said utilization-history information including said content IDs and said apparatus ID or said program ID, which are received from said request means employed in said terminal, as well as said execution-history information acquired by said acquisition means; and

said collection means employed in said server collects utilization records of contents utilized by said terminal or utilized by execution of said application program and execution records of said application program on the basis of said utilization-history information.

17. The content-providing system according to claim 14 wherein:

said server further comprises acquisition means for acquiring information other than said content IDs as information on said predetermined contents, utilization of which is requested by said request means employed in said terminal, from said terminal;

said utilization-history information storage means employed in said server is used for storing said content IDs and said apparatus ID or said program ID, which are received from said request means employed in said terminal, as well as said information acquired by said acquisition means as said information other than said content IDs; and

said collection means employed in said server collects utilization records of contents utilized by said terminal or utilized by execution of said application program on the basis of said utilization-history information.

18. The content-providing system according to claim 17 wherein said information other than said content IDs is a selling price of said contents or a sale date of said contents.

19. The content-providing system according to claim 14 wherein:

said terminal further comprises moving/copying

means for moving or copying said contents stored in said storage means or said utilization condition received by said reception means to another terminal;

said server further comprises acquisition means for acquiring an apparatus ID of said other terminal, to which said contents or said utilization condition is moved or copied by said moving/copying means employed in said terminal, from said terminal;

said utilization-history information storage means employed in said server is used for storing said utilization-history information including said content IDs received from said request means employed in said terminal and said apparatus ID received from said request means employed in said terminal or said apparatus ID acquired by said acquisition means; and

said collection means employed in said server collects utilization records of contents utilized by said terminal on the basis of said utilization-history information.

20. The content-providing system according to claim 19 wherein:

said acquisition means employed in said server further acquires time information, at which said moving/copying means employed in said terminal moves or

copies said contents or said utilization condition to said other terminal, from said terminal;

said utilization-history information storage means employed in said server is used for storing said utilization-history information including said content IDs received from said request means employed in said terminal, said apparatus ID received from said request means employed in said terminal or said apparatus ID acquired by said acquisition means and said time information acquired by said acquisition means; and

said collection means employed in said server collects utilization records of contents utilized by said terminal on the basis of said utilization-history information.

21. The content-providing system according to claim 19 wherein:

said acquisition means employed in said server further acquires an apparatus ID of another terminal, which has moved contents or a utilization condition to said terminal, from said other terminal;

said utilization-history information storage means employed in said server is used for storing said utilization-history information including said content IDs received from said request means employed in said

terminal and said apparatus ID received from said request

means employed in said terminal or said apparatus ID

acquired by said acquisition means; and

said collection means employed in said server

collects utilization records of contents utilized by said

terminal on the basis of said utilization-history

information.

22. The content-providing system according to

claim 21 wherein:

said acquisition means employed in said server

further acquires time information, at which said contents

or said utilization condition were moved or copied to

said terminal by said other terminal, from said other

terminal;

said utilization-history information storage means

employed in said server is used for storing said

utilization-history information including said content

IDs received from said request means employed in said

terminal, said apparatus ID received from said request

means employed in said terminal or said apparatus ID

acquired by said acquisition means and said time

information acquired by said acquisition means; and

said collection means employed in said server

collects utilization records of contents utilized by said

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terminal on the basis of said utilization-history information.

23. The content-providing system according to claim 14 wherein:

said server further comprises detection means for detecting illegal utilization of said contents in said terminal; and

said utilization-condition transmission means limits transmission of said utilization condition to said terminal, which has carried out said detected illegal utilization.

24. An information-processing apparatus connected to a terminal for utilizing contents through a network, said information-processing apparatus comprising:

utilization-condition transmission means for transmitting a utilization condition for utilizing particular contents selected among said contents as predetermined contents, utilization of which is requested by said terminal, to said terminal;

utilization-history information storage means for storing utilization-history information received from said terminal as information including content IDs of said predetermined contents and an apparatus ID of said terminal or a program ID of an application program used

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for utilizing said predetermined contents;

collection means for collecting utilization records of contents utilized by said terminal or utilized by execution of said application program on the basis of said utilization-history information stored in said utilization-history information storage means; and

processing execution means for carrying out processing based on said utilization records.

25. An information-processing method adopted by an information-processing apparatus connected to a terminal for utilizing contents through a network, said information-processing method comprising:

a utilization-condition transmission step of transmitting a utilization condition for utilizing particular contents selected among said contents as predetermined contents, utilization of which is requested by said terminal, to said terminal;

a utilization-history information storage step of storing utilization-history information received from said terminal as information including content IDs of said predetermined contents and an apparatus ID of said terminal or a program ID of an application program used for utilizing said predetermined contents;

a collection step of collecting utilization records

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of contents utilized by said terminal or utilized by
execution of said application program on the basis of
said utilization-history information stored in processing
carried out at said utilization-history information
storage step; and

a processing execution step of carrying out
processing based on said utilization records.

26. A program to be executed by a computer as a
program for controlling an information-processing
apparatus, which is connected to a terminal for utilizing
contents through a network, to carry out processing
comprising:

a utilization-condition transmission control step
of controlling an operation to transmit a utilization
condition for utilizing particular contents selected
among said contents as predetermined contents,
utilization of which is requested by said terminal, to
said terminal;

a utilization-history information storage control
step of controlling an operation to store utilization-
history information received from said terminal as
information including content IDs of said predetermined
contents and an apparatus ID of said terminal or a
program ID of an application program used for utilizing

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said predetermined contents;

a collection control step of controlling an operation to collect utilization records of contents utilized by said terminal or utilized by execution of said application program on the basis of said utilization-history information stored in processing carried out at said utilization-history information storage control step; and

a processing execution control step of controlling an operation to carry out processing based on said utilization records.